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A TREE MAY GROW FOR YOU

You have just been handed three seed black walnuts which were grown at Mount Vernon, Virginia. Properly handled, these seeds should germinate and produce seedlings that may grow into highly desirable trees. They will then be a continuous reminder of your visit to the home of George Washington during the Twenty-first National 4-H Club Camp, held in Washington, D. C., June 13-20, 1951.

It is suggested that you plant the nuts where the trees are wanted in their final location, remembering that black walnut trees (Juglans nigra) prefer rich, moist, and well-drained soils from limestone. Perhaps you can find such spots about the farmstead, along a driveway or lane, or in a corner of a field. Choose an unshaded seed spot 2 or 3 feet in diameter with full overhead light, and, using a shovel, hoe, or mattock, prepare it by removing all vegetation and loosening up the soil. The walnut should be pressed into the ground to a depth of about 2 inches and the soil firmed with the foot. Make sure the soil does not ever become thoroughly dry. The seed spot area should always be protected from livestock and rodents and kept free of weeds.

Where squirrels might remove the nut, a quart-size tin can pushed down over the nut and the ground level end of the can slit and spread back so that the young seedling may sprout through the open end, should discourage squirrel pilfering. Make sure, though that this does not deprive the nut and prospective seedling of necessary moisture. Planting may be done in spring or fall. If it is necessary to store the nuts for any length of time, they should be placed in a can of sand, kept damp, but not wet, and stored in a cool, moist cellar. This is called stratifying and keeps the nut from drying out. There is no merit to the rumor that black walnut trees give off a toxic (poisonous) organic compound through their roots that is injurious to other plants.

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